

TONGA GOVERNMENT GAZETTE SUPPLEMENT EXTRAORDINARY

No.11

13TH, MARCH

2020

Office of
THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH



Ministry of Health, Vaiola Hospital, PO Box 59, Nuku'alofa
Kingdom of Tonga

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
GOVERNMENT OF TONGA

DECLARATION OF AN EMERGENCY NOTIFIABLE CONDITION

Pursuant to sections 171 and 172 of the Public Health Act 2008, and after due consideration of the following relevant factors –

- (1) The World Health Organization's ("WHO") declaration of novel coronavirus ("COVID-19"), on 30th January 2020, as a *Public Health Emergency of International Concern* (PHEIC) pursuant to the International Health Regulations 2005;
- (2) On the 11th March 2020, due to the alarming levels of spread and severity of COVID-19 globally, WHO has declared COVID-19 as a pandemic;
- (3) The confirmed cases of COVID-19 in countries proximate to Tonga; and
- (4) The significant risks of global transmission of COVID-19.

I HEREBY DECLARE that COVID-19 is an emergency notifiable condition under the Public Health Act 2008. The emergency notifiable condition of the COVID-19 is set out below:

- (1) COVID-19, as an emergency notifiable condition, shall be identified according to the following four *notifiable conditions* as defined and amended by the WHO from time to time –
 - (a) suspected case of COVID-19;
 - (b) probable case of COVID-19;
 - (c) confirmed case of COVID-19; and
 - (d) contact to any of above three notifiable conditions (a) to (c).
- (2) The four *notifiable conditions* of COVID-19 as set out in paragraph (1) are to be determined upon the following criteria as defined, and amended by the WHO from time to time –
 - (a) A *suspected case* of COVID-19 shall be a person:
 - (i) with acute respiratory illness with fever and at least one sign or symptom of respiratory disease (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) **AND** with no other aetiology that fully explains the clinical presentation **AND** a history of travel to or residence in a country, area or territory reporting local transmission of COVID-19 disease during the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms; **OR**

- (ii) with acute respiratory illness **AND** having been in contact with a confirmed or probable COVID-19 (see definition of contact) in the last 14 days prior to onset of symptoms; **OR**
 - (iii) with severe acute respiratory infection with fever and at least one sign or symptom of respiratory disease (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) **AND** requiring hospitalisation **AND** no other aetiology that fully explains the clinical presentation.
- (b) A *probable case* of COVID-19 is a person who:
- (i) is a suspect case;
 - (ii) whose blood samples had been sent for COVID-19 testing in a WHO endorsed laboratory; **AND**
 - (iii) the WHO endorsed laboratory has reported the tests as inconclusive.
- (c) A *confirmed case* of COVID-19 is a person whose blood sample is confirmed by a WHO endorsed laboratory of COVID-19 infection, irrespective of clinical signs and symptoms.
- (d) A *contact case* is a person that is involved in the following:
- (i) Providing direct care without proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for suspect, probable, or confirmed COVID-19 patient(s);
 - (ii) Staying in the same close environment of a suspect, probable or confirmed COVID-19 case (including a workplace, classroom, household and any other gatherings); and
 - (iii) Traveling together in close proximity (1 meter) with a suspect, probable or confirmed COVID-19 case in any kind of conveyance within a 14-day period after the onset of symptoms in the case under consideration.

THIS DECLARATION shall be applied over all the land and sea areas of the Kingdom of Tonga, commencing on the **12th March 2020** until **12th September 2020**, unless amended pursuant to section 175 of the Public Health Act 2008.

DECLARED in Nuku'alofa on this **12th March 2020**.

Honourable Associate Professor `Amelia Latu Afuha'amango Tu'ipulotu
Minister for Health